



PARTY PLANNER

A PRACTICAL, STRESS-FREE APPROACH TO
PLANNING A BEAUTIFUL CELEBRATION

by LUSH BALLOON EVENTS

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Planning a party can feel overwhelming – but it doesn't have to. This guide walks you through what to do and when, giving you practical steps, checklists and space for your own notes.

YOUR PARTY TIMELINE

Ideally 8 + weeks
before (but at least
6-8 weeks before)

- Set budget
- choose date & location
- hire venue if needed (or host it yourself)
- create guest list
- decide overall vibe
- book entertainment (if needed)
- book event stylist

4-6 weeks
before

- Sent invitations
- choose theme/colours
- plan décor

2-3 weeks
before

- Place an order for food & cake
- confirm entertainment
- confirm décor and layout

1 week before

- Confirm RSVPs
- create detailed event timeline
- create a party playlist
- final checks and finish pending tasks

Event day

- Decorate the venue
- Welcome guests
- Relax & Enjoy

FOUNDATIONS

8 + WEEKS BEFORE

Define the Event

- What are you celebrating? (birthday, baby shower, wedding, corporate event, etc.)

- Event date & time: (pick a date that works best for you and your guests)

- Venue/ location: (secure your venue early to avoid last minute stress)

- Guest age range

- Overall vibe (theme or aesthetic that fits with the vibe of the occasion)

- Choosing the reason for the celebration informs all other decisions (food, décor, activities)
- Consider practicalities; venue capacity, accessibility, weather if outdoors
- Decide the overall vibe (this keeps your theme and styling choices cohesive)

FOUNDATIONS

8 + WEEKS BEFORE

Budget & Priorities

- Total budget:

- Top priorities: (e.g. venue, décor, food, entertainment)

- Areas to simply or adjust:

–Write down what matters most

–Allocate a percentage to each priority (e.g. 40% food, 30% decor, entertainment)

–Include a small contingency fund for last-minute extras

Tip: Spending intentionally reduces stress– you don't have to splurge everywhere to create a memorable day.

PARTY BUDGET

Keep track of your spending as you plan

Budget %		
Food	Décor	Entertainment

Item/ supplier	% of budget	Estimated	Actual	Paid
Total:				

FOUNDATIONS

8 + WEEKS BEFORE

Guest lists & Invitations

- Create a guest list (find template on the next page)
- Decide RSVP method (online, phone, paper)
- Note dietary restrictions
- Send invitations

- Your guest count affects food, seating, décor scale and party favours
- Sending invitations 4–6 weeks before to allow guests time to respond
- Track RSVPs and follow up early to finalise numbers for food and seating

Tip: Making invitations easy . You can create your own, or for a polished, stress-free look check out our editable invitation templates– fully customisable and ready to use!

Guest name

Contact Info

Attending

[illegible]

DETAILS & BOOKINGS

4 - 6 WEEKS BEFORE

Theme, Colour & Styling

- Theme or Style chosen:

- Colour palette:

- Decor Elements required:

- A cohesive colour palette (2-4 colours) keeps your party visually unified
- Décor doesn't need to be elaborate; small details like table runners, balloons, and signage elevate the look.
- Collect inspiration to share with any vendors or helpers. (e.g. Pinterest)

Tip: Neutral or classic themes often feel more timeless; bright palettes are fun for kids.

DETAILS & BOOKINGS

4 – 6 WEEKS BEFORE

Food, Cake & Party favours

- Choose catering/ food style
- Order cake/ desserts
- Note dietary restrictions
- Order or prepare party favours
- Decide serving style

-Finger foods and buffet-style setups simplify service

-Confirm numbers with caterers or bakers based on RSVP

-Party favours don't need to be expensive – thoughtful items matter more than costly ones

Tip: Colour-coordinate food or desserts with your party palette for a polished look.

DETAILS & BOOKINGS

4 – 6 WEEKS BEFORE

Entertainment & Activities

- Entertainment booked
- Activities and games planned
- Music/ playlist ready
- Props/ materials prepared

- Book entertainers early to secure availability
- Plan backup activities in case of timing changes or weather
- Keep age range in mind- activities should suit all guests

LOGISTICS & FLOW

2 - 3 WEEKS BEFORE

Setup & Layout Planning

- Decide feature are/ backdrop
- Food & cake table layout
- Seating arrangement
- Access & power check
- Sketch layout (optional)

- Visualising the space prevents last-minute surprises
- Walk through the event in your mind- where guest will sit, eat, play and gather
- Consider practicalities like traffic flow, table spacing and safety

LOGISTICS & FLOW

2 - 3 WEEKS BEFORE

Event Timeline

- Setup time confirmed
- Guest arrival timing
- Main moments scheduled (cake, special activities)
- Wind-down/ departure plan
- Pack-down timing

- Keep your schedule realistic and flexible
- Assign helpers to tasks so you can stay present

Tip: Include buffer times to reduce stress– it's normal for things to run slightly ahead or behind schedule.

FINAL PREP

1 WEEKS BEFORE

Final checks

- Confirm all suppliers
- Finalise headcount
- Prepare payments
- Pack essentials kit (tape, scissors, wipes, etc)
- Weather/backup plan if needed

-Do final walkthrough of the space if possible

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

CHECKLIST

COMPLETE PARTY CHECKLIST

Foundations (8 weeks before)

- ☐ Budget set
- ☐ Event date & time
- ☐ Venue booked
- ☐ Guest list created
- ☐ Invitations planned

Details & Bookings (4-6 weeks before)

- ☐ Theme/ colours decided
- ☐ Décor brainstormed
- ☐ Entertainment booked
- ☐ Catering/ food arranged
- ☐ Cake ordered
- ☐ Favours planned
- ☐ Playlist prepared (if you have one)

Logistics & Flow (2-3 weeks before)

- ☐ Setup & layout planned
- ☐ Timeline created

Final Prep (1 week before)

- ☐ Suppliers confirmed
- ☐ Headcount finalised
- ☐ Payments/ tips ready
- ☐ Emergency kit prepared

Event Day

- ☐ Setup complete
- ☐ Enjoy the celebration
- ☐ Pack-down finished

YOU'RE READY

All planning done? Take a deep breath and enjoy the celebration you've created.

If you'd like support with styling your décor,
I'd love to help bring your vision to life.

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